

University of California, Santa Cruz
Politics Department

Politics 20: Introduction to American Politics

Summer 2018, Session 1

M&W 9:00am -12:30pm, Social Sciences 2, Room 71

Instructor: Paige Lancourt

E-mail: plancour@ucsc.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00pm in Merrill 8

Teaching Assistant: Andrew Meyer (andrewmeyer@ucsc.edu)

Course Description: This course provides an introduction to American politics through an examination of public policy. Beginning with an overview of American governance, the course starts by surveying the policy-making process and theories of public policy in the context of U.S. political institutions. The majority of the course then focuses on three issue areas in domestic policy: **health care policy**, **social welfare policy**, and **immigration policy**. In each case we place the United States in comparative context, trace the historical roots of the current policy approach, discuss competing alternatives, and examine recent political debates. Throughout the course, there will be an emphasis on understanding the role of and relationship between the ideas, the interests, and the institutions that tend to complicate the American public policy process. Students will also explore how established structures such as federalism and a national separation of powers have interacted with recent developments in U.S. politics, such as partisan polarization, income inequality, and the rise of conservatism, to reshape contemporary debates about American politics and policy-making.

Required Texts:

Paul Starr, *Remedy and Reaction: The Peculiar American Struggle over Health Care Reform*, Revised Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013)

Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004)

Required texts are available for purchase at the Bay Tree Bookstore. They will also be held on reserve at McHenry Library to be checked out for two hours at a time. All other readings are available on this class's canvas site.

Course Requirements:

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| 1) "Policy Essay" 1: Due Friday, July 6 th | 25% |
| 2) "Policy Essay" 2: Due Friday, July 20 th | 25% |
| 3) Attendance, Participation, Discussion | 25% |
| 4) Comprehensive in-class final exam: Wed, July 25 th | 25% |

*Note: Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the class.

Attendance, Participation, Discussion: Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Official documentation (such as a doctor's note or verification of necessary attendance at a school-sponsored event) is required in order for an absence to be excused. Each student is expected to have done the required readings **prior to class** and be equipped to participate during class. In addition to regular attendance, part of your grade hinges on *meaningful participation*. Meaningful participation includes but is not limited to being engaged in group work and activities, bringing relevant texts and materials to class, coming to office hours (as needed), and speaking up in class. This participation may include, at the instruction of the instructor, posting discussion questions on this class's canvas site at various times during the quarter.

Citation and Documentation of Sources in Papers: All courses in the Politics Department use one of two standard forms of citation, parenthetical/in-text citations *or* footnotes. For the in-text system, the Department follows the Modern Language Association (MLA), for footnotes, the Chicago Manual of Style. Familiarize yourself with the style guides for the two systems found at on the [Politics Department website](#). These systems are also outlined in other style guides, including Diana Hacker's [A Pocket Style Manual](#).

Late Paper Policy: Late papers will be graded down in the absence of a valid written excuse (a valid excuse meaning medical or family emergencies). Since this is a five-week summer course, the late paper policy is strict in order to keep students from falling behind. A late paper will receive one full letter grade reduction for every day it is late. Please communicate with the instructor in advance if a situation arises in which you anticipate turning in a late paper or are seeking to request a temporary extension.

Electronic Devices: Laptops may be used in class for note-taking purposes only. However, I highly encourage students to take hand-written notes during lecture, as this method of note-taking has proven in studies to be more effective in terms of comprehension and long-term retention of class material. To encourage this method of learning, students will be allowed to use hand-written notes on the final exam (no typed notes allowed). Finally, cell phones should be silenced and out of reach during active class time. Students may feel free to use cell phones during break time. Misuse of electronic devices will result in lost participation points at my discretion.

Academic Integrity: I take academic integrity very seriously. Plagiarism – which includes the undocumented or inadequately documented use of another person's material – will not be tolerated. Penalties for plagiarism and others forms of cheating can include a failing grade on an assignment, or the entire course. In certain instances, academic dishonesty can result in suspension or expulsion from the University. Familiarize yourself with the University's academic integrity principles and policies at http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/undergraduate_students.

Disability Accommodations: If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact DRC by phone at 459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu for more information.

Reading Schedule

Please have the readings listed for each date completed before the start of lecture.

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY

Monday, June 25 – Introduction to American Politics and Theories of Public Policy:

- Carter Wilson, “National Institutions of Policy Making,” pp. 90-110 in *Public Policy: Continuity and Change*.
- Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, 1-34; 232-57.
- Pew Research Center, “Partisan polarization, in Congress and among public, is greater than ever,” by Drew DeSilver (July 17, 2013).
- Dan Ariely, “Americans Want to Live in a Much More Equal Country (They Just Don’t Realize It),” *The Atlantic* (August 2, 2012).
- Alan I. Abramowitz, “America today is two different countries. They don’t get along.” *The Washington Post* (March 10, 2016).

PART II: HEALTH CARE POLICY

Wednesday, June 27 – Issues and Debates in Health Care Policy:

- T.R. Reid, “The Paradox,” pp. 28-45, and “Different Models, Common Principles,” pp. 16-27 in *The Healing of America*.
- Paul Starr, *Remedy and Reaction: The Peculiar American Struggle over Health Care Reform*, pp. 1-24.
- Janny Scott, “Life at the Top in America Isn’t Just Better, It’s Longer,” *Class Matters*, pp. 27-50.

Monday, July 2 – The Politics of Health Care Reform:

- Starr, *Remedy and Reaction*, pp. 194-298.
- Jonathan Oberlander, “Long Time Coming: Why Health Reform Finally Passed,” *Health Affairs* (June 2010), pp. 1112-1116.
- “The Affordable Care Act at Five Years,” congressional testimony by Douglas Holtz-Eakin, President, American Action Forum (con argument); and David Blumenthal, President, The Commonwealth Fund (pro argument), before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, March 19, 2015.
- Robert Pear, “Without the Insurance Mandate, Health Care’s Future May Be in Doubt,” *The New York Times* (December 18, 2017).

Suggested:

- Vanessa Williamson et. al., “The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism,” *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (March 2011), pp. 25-43.
- Starr, *Remedy and Reaction*, pp. 27-76, 161-193.
- Jacob Hacker, “Why Reform Happened,” *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*

(Summer 2011), pp. 437-41.

Wednesday, July 4 – NO CLASS

***Friday, July 6 – Policy Essay 1 Due by 5:00pm on canvas**

PART III: SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY

Monday, July 9 – Issues and Debates in Social Welfare Policy:

- Kristina Cooke, David Rhode, and Ryan Mcneil, “The Undeserving Poor,” from *The Atlantic*, December 20, 2012.
- Rachel Black and Aleta Sprague, “The Rise and Reign of the Welfare Queen,” from *New America Weekly* (Edition 135), September 22, 2016.
- Theda Skocpol, *Origins of Social Policy in the U.S.* (Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 3-33, 209-214.

Suggested:

- Suzanne Mettler, *The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy* (University of Chicago Press, 2011), 8-30.

Wednesday, July 11 – The Politics of Welfare Reform:

- Theda Skocpol, *Origins of Social Policy in the U.S.* (Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 136-166.
- Ira Katznelson, “Welfare in Black and White,” in *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America* (W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), pp. 42-52.
- Michael Katz, “Intellectual Foundations of the War on Poverty,” in *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare*, pp. 102-113, 146-155.
- Robert C. Lieberman, “Race and the Limits of Solidarity: American Welfare State Development in Comparative Perspective,” in *Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform*, eds. Sanford F. Schram, Joe Soss, and Richard C. Fording (University of Michigan Press, 2003).

PART IV: U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY

Monday, July 16 – Issues and Debates in Immigration Policy:

- Daniel Tichenor, “Navigating an American Minefield: The Politics of Illegal Immigration,” *The Forum* (Fall 2009), pp. 1-21.
- Pew Research Center, “Unauthorized Immigrants: Who They Are and What the Public Thinks” (January 2015).
- Aviva Chomsky, *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal* (Boston: Beacon

Press, 2014) pp. 23-39 (Chapter 1).

- Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door*, pp. 3-26, 59-80, 129-144 (Chapters 1, 3, and 7).

Suggested:

- Congressional Quarterly Researcher, *Immigration Conflict* (March 2012).

Wednesday, July 18 – The Politics of Immigration Reform:

- Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door*, pp. 219-268 (Chapters 11 and 12).
- Lina Newton, *Illegal, Alien or Immigrant*, pp. 42-66.
- Linda Bosniak, “The Undocumented Immigrant: Contending Policy Approaches,” pp. 85-94; in Carol M. Swain, ed., *Debating Immigration*.
- “Trump Ends DACA, Calls on Congress to Act,” *NPR: Politics* (September 5, 2017).
- Michael Jones-Correa and Els de Graauw, “Looking Back to See Ahead: Unanticipated Changes in Immigration from 1986 to the Present and Implications for American Politics Today,” *Annual Review of Political Science* (2013), pp. 209-23. *skim

Recommendations for Future Reading:

- Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan L. Hajnal, *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015).

***Friday, July 20 – Policy Essay 2 Due by 5:00pm on canvas**

PART V: CONCLUSIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD

Monday, July 23 – The continued complexity of American public policy development:

- Steven Teles, “Kludgeocracy in America,” *National Affairs* (Fall 2013) pp. 97-114.
- John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, pp. 215-18.
- Stone, *Policy Paradox*, pp. 376-83.

Wednesday, July 25: Final in-class exam